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SUBJECT: SRSG PRONK DEPLORES AU DELAY AND WARNS GNU IS
'GANGING UP' ON AU

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Classified By: AMBASSADOR JOHN R. BOLTON FOR REASONS 1.4 (B,D)

11. (C) SUMMARY. In a February 28 meeting with Ambassador Bolton, Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) in Sudan Jan Pronk warned that the Government of National Unity (GNU) was using anti-West and anti-UN rhetoric to 'gang up' on African Union (AU) Members and other countries on the continent in its aggressive lobbying campaign against the prospect of United Nations (UN) troops in Darfur. In response to Ambassador Bolton's question of how to counter this pressure in African capitals, Pronk noted he had suggested to the SYG that Special Adviser Brahimi be dispatched to confront Sudanese President al-Bashir and AU Commission Chairman Konare and recommended any intervention the U.S. might consider be done at ministerial level and be careful not to vilify the AU, since it was Konare who was the main problem. Ambassador Bolton recommended that Pronk see Congolese Permanent Representative (PR) Ikouebe while Pronk was in town to reinforce the message that AU PSC postponement was counterproductive. END SUMMARY.

12. (C) SRSG Pronk did not mince words at the opening of his February 28 meeting with Ambassador Bolton, declaring he 'deplored' the decision of the AU to delay its planned PSC meeting to March 10. He described his preparations already underway in Khartoum for the eventual transition of the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) to a UN peacekeeping operation, adding he would compare notes with UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) Military Adviser Major-General Mehta on March 1. Pronk noted that only the military mandate for his planning was absent; a political, humanitarian and civil mandate were already in place.

13. (C) Pronk was emphatic about the link between progress at the Abuja Talks and the success of DPKO contingency planning, offering four scenarios given projected outcomes. The first supposed a full-fledged peace agreement, which both Pronk and Ambassador Bolton agreed was virtually impossible. This scenario would give rise to a Chapter VI mandate for an eventual UN Darfur force. The second and third scenarios Pronk presented (a 'good' peace agreement between parties or in Abuja; a partial, 'fake' agreement along the lines of the

N'Djamena Agreement) would result in a combination Chapter VI/Chapter VII mandate. Finally, the fourth scenario, one of absence of a peace agreement all together, would necessitate a Chapter VII mandate. Pronk favored the second scenario but admitted that the third was more likely.

14. (C) Pronk thought that many of the existing AMIS forces could be retained, singling out the Ghanaians and the Nigerians, but that unity of command was crucial and that a single UN leadership should be employed at the head of any projected UN force. Pronk recommended that Africans and Asians be incorporated into the force to prevent 'antagonizing' the GNU. Pronk feared 'cannibalization' of the Southern Sudan force, which was necessary to ensure that Khartoum did not further undermine the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, but he acknowledged that southern troops could eventually be made available on a rotating basis.

15. (C) Pronk's biggest concern in getting to a mandate for the eventual UN force was the latest trend exhibited by the GNU of 'ganging up' on the AU, a tactic it was also applying to other African countries. Although Khartoum 'always says no first but in the end says yes,' Pronk noted the difficulty in securing GNU consent this time around. Pronk said the March 3 PSC meeting was postponed solely at GNU request to get AU members to reverse their January 12 endorsement in principle of an AMIS re-hatting, a substantive back-track, in Pronk's estimation. Ambassador Bolton noted that this trend did not bode well for the battle in the Security Council to forward a resolution on AMIS transition, saying that we would have not only a Qatar-backed, Sudan-led Arab League to contend with, but AU Members' opposition (especially Congo-Brazzaville) as well. Pronk reported that Konare was particularly susceptible to Khartoum's pressuring and related a quotation attributed to Konare in which Konare admitted to having been 'pushed into transition' on January 12 by 'those who will pay for it.'

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16. (C) Another worrying trend, according to Pronk, was Khartoum's campaign against the UN, which had resulted in threats against UN personnel, abductions and a declaration by al-Bashir that Darfur would become a 'graveyard' for UN troops, in response to which Pronk suggested follow-up from SYG Annan with the GNU. He advocated a 'go slow' message to convey that the UN needed to eventually but not now take over from AMIS and to provide the AU with a solid exit strategy. Pronk reiterated his call for a broad mandate of long duration for the Darfur force.

17. (C) In response to Ambassador Bolton's questions on how to counter the GNU's campaigns, which Pronk acknowledged were the primary obstacle to transition, Pronk suggested that Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), especially First Vice President Salva Kiir, stop acting like National Congress Party 'chameleons' and exercise more influence over Darfur policy, which continues to be dictated by Khartoum. Pronk assessed that this reticence was symptomatic of an SPLM and Government of Southern Sudan tendency to back away from Darfur's troubles, having already gone through enough of their own and feeling no real connection to the west of Sudan. Pronk noted that the SPLM similarly 'ignores' the problems of Eastern Sudan, where the GNU has not abandoned its military option.

18. (C) Pronk agreed that Konare's manipulation was not necessarily representative of widespread AU sentiment toward transition and cautioned against lobbying AU Members to ensure they did not reverse the January 12 decision as 'repetitive.' Pronk recommended Ministerial, rather than Ambassadorial, interventions to make clear that the problem was not with the AU as a whole, and he mentioned his own suggestion to the SYG that Brahimi be dispatched to confront al-Bashir and Konare individually. Ambassador Bolton recommended that Pronk see Congolese Permanent Representative

(PR) Ikouebe while Pronk was in town to reinforce the message that AU PSC postponement was counterproductive.

¶9. (C) Pronk concluded by recommending that the Council use the tools at its disposal to effect progress on Darfur, including the Sudan Sanctions Committee Panel of Experts Report and the International Criminal Court.

¶10. (C) COMMENT. Pronk's comments confirm the depths of GNU hostility toward AMIS transition and do not bode well for prospects of pushing a resolution, given Chinese, Qatari, Russian and now possibly Congolese, Ghanaian and Tanzanian sympathies. Council consultations on Darfur are tentatively scheduled for March 6, a good opportunity for us to re-evaluate Council opinion towards AMIS transition and to focus any lobbying efforts accordingly. END COMMENT.
BOLTON